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ABSTRACT

This booklet is intended to help a department, faculty, or subject coordinator to decide on priorities for strengthening their work and to draw up an action plan to improve standards in the subject. It suggests that it can be used to supplement the whole-school development plan. The booklet provides charts to rate students and curriculum in the following areas: standards in Key Stages 2 (KS2) and 3 (KS3); attainment and progress in KS2 and KS3 of different groups of pupils; attainment in different aspects of the subject; pupils' attitudes and behaviors; schemes of work and middle-term planning; short term planning; teaching effectiveness; assessment structure; management of the subject and general issues; and action points. (PM)

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Auditing and Reviewing a Subject in Key Stages 2 and 3 in Middle Schools.

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CS 511 705

National Strategies for
Literacy, Numeracy and Key Stage 3

Subject leaders and coordinators in middle schools

Status: Recommended

Date of issue: 05/02

Ref: DfES 0423/2002

Auditing and reviewing a subject in Key Stages 2 and 3 in middle schools

Name of School:

Headteacher:

Subject being audited:

Senior manager with oversight of this subject:

Subject leader/coordinator

Other staff with responsibility, e.g. literacy coordinator or SENCO:

Date of completion of audit:

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Introduction

This booklet is to help a subject department to decide on priorities for strengthening its work and to identify a number of action points to improve standards in the subject. It can be used to supplement the whole-school development plan.

The audit is best carried out in the summer term when a wider range of information on pupils' performance is available. A senior manager and the head of department or faculty, or subject coordinator are likely to lead it, but all staff in the department should be included in discussions and contribute to the gathering of evidence.

Many of the judgements needed can be made through discussion in two or three departmental meetings. Others will arise from analysing test and examination data, looking at samples of pupils' work and marking, referring to records of pupils' progress and from observing lessons. Information from lessons that have already been observed as part of the school's normal routines can be used, perhaps supplemented by observation of a further small sample of lessons across Key Stages 2 and 3. The gathering of evidence, especially lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work, will need to be planned carefully over a few weeks, since it may require the equivalent of two days of the head of department's time.

The use of best-fit phrases and tick boxes throughout the booklet helps to keep recording to a minimum. Once the possible points for action in each section have been determined, the head of department can incorporate these into the department's action plan. Senior managers and departmental staff will then have a clear view of the overall developments that are needed and how best to use the professional support of a Key Stage 2 and/or Key Stage 3 consultant. Reviewing a subject in the way suggested in this booklet should form part of the school's regular review process, usually on an annual basis.

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Standards in Key Stages 2 and 3

Based on last year's Key Stage 2 test results and teacher assessments, and annual teacher assessments, how do the overall standards achieved by pupils compare with national averages? You could refer to the benchmark information in the DfES's Autumn Package.
Tick boxes or enter grades as appropriate.

All subjects
Overall trends over three years.

Trends over three years	**risen significantly**	**risen a little**	**stayed about the same**	**fallen**
Over the last three years, pupils' attainment in the subject on entry to the school has:				
Over the last three years, pupils' attainment in the subject on leaving the school has:				

Core subjects only
Percentage of all pupils attaining level 5 and above

Attainment in Key Stage 2 tests:	**National averages**		
	above	**in line**	**below**
Proportion (%) of all pupils achieving **level 4** and above was:			
Proportion (%) of boys achieving **level 4** and above was:			
Proportion (%) of girls achieving **level 4** and above was:			
Proportion (%) of all pupils achieving **level 5** and above was:			
Proportion (%) of boys achieving **level 5** and above was:			
Proportion (%) of girls achieving **level 5** and above was:			

PANDA grade for last year's KS2 tests in the subject in comparison with all schools:	
PANDA grade for last year's KS2 tests in the subject in comparison with similar schools:	

Non-core subjects only – teacher assessment
Percentage of pupils judged to be attaining level 4 and above

Teacher assessment:	
Proportion (%) of all pupils achieving **level 4** and above was:	
Proportion (%) of boys achieving **level 4** and above was:	
Proportion (%) of girls achieving **level 4** and above was	
In your judgement, are the standards reflected by teacher assessment: (underline) Excellent Good Satisfactory Unsatisfactory	

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Attainment and progress in KS2 and KS3 of different groups of pupils

Analysis of data	fully in place	partly in place	not in place
The department analyses its assessment, attendance and other performance information by year group, gender, ethnicity and background of pupils.			

Consider the following groups and any others particularly relevant to your own school or department. You should consider gender as a general issue within each of the groups.

*pupils in **different year groups***
*pupils from **different sets***
*pupils with **special educational needs***
*pupils who are **high attainers** in the subject*
*pupils learning **English as an additional language***
*pupils from **ethnic minority** communities*
*pupils from **travelling** communities*

How does the attainment and progress of different groups of pupils compare with the general national and LEA profile? You could use the value added and benchmark information in the DfES's Autumn Package for core subjects.

Comments on noticeable differences in the attainment and progress of particular groups:

What could be done? Where relevant, list up to two action points directed at addressing differences in progress or attainment of:	
Different year groups, sets or classes, including differences between boys and girls	**Pupils learning English as an additional language**
■ ■	■ ■
Pupils with SEN, or gifted and talented pupils	**Pupils from particular communities**
■ ■	■ ■

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Attainment in different aspects of the subject

Based on the records of pupils' progress, are there any aspects of the subject where pupils show particular strengths or weaknesses? If so, record them here. You may want to use for comparison purposes those documents that are relevant to the subject, e.g. National Curriculum level descriptions; key objectives for Years 4 - 8 where available; and the expectations set out in the Frameworks for teaching.

Year 4, high attainers	Year 4, middle attainers	Year 4, lower attainers
Year 5, high attainers	**Year 5, middle attainers**	**Year 5, lower attainers**
Year 6, high attainers	**Year 6, middle attainers**	**Year 6, lower attainers**
Year 7, high attainers	**Year 7, middle attainers**	**Year 7, lower attainers**
Year 8, high attainers	**Year 8, middle attainers**	**Year 8, lower attainers**

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What could be done? List up to two action points to improve pupils' attainment in each group.
Year 4 ■ ■
Year 5 ■ ■
Year 6 ■ ■
Year 7 ■ ■
Year 8 ■ ■

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Pupils' attitudes and behaviour

Base judgements on staff discussions, lesson observations and, where possible, talking to pupils about their work.
Tick the most appropriate boxes.

In general:	Virtually all pupils	Most pupils	Some pupils	Relatively few pupils	Insufficient evidence
Pupils show an interest in learning the subject and have positive attitudes towards it.					
They listen attentively to their teachers and to each other.					
They answer questions willingly, explaining and demonstrating their ideas clearly using subject-specific vocabulary.					
They present written and graphical work carefully.					
They concentrate and try hard, even when the work is demanding.					
They show some initiative and can plan and organise their work without direct supervision; for some of the time they work independently.					
They respond positively to suggestions for improving their work.					
They complete homework tasks conscientiously.					

Are there any noticeable differences in pupils' attitudes or behaviour between different year groups, classes or different groups of pupils? If so, note them here.

What could be done?
List up to three action points to improve pupils' attitudes and behaviour.

-
-
-

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Planning

Schemes of work and medium-term planning

How effective is your planning across Key Stages 2 and 3 overall? Check your practice against the following questions and tick the appropriate boxes.

Does your medium-term plan/scheme of work:		**usually**	**sometimes but not always**	**rarely**
outline the work pupils will be taught over the year and each term, with the time or number of lessons to be allocated to each topic?				
specify objectives in line with expectations in the literacy/English, mathematics, science or ICT Frameworks, the NC programmes of study/QCA schemes of work, or agreed syllabus?				
provide breadth and balance across all aspects/attainment targets of the subject?				
identify when and how to develop cross-curricular skills, such as:	literacy;			
	numeracy;			
	ICT?			
specify special provision for pupils who need it, e.g.	'catch-up' for Year 7 pupils who enter the year at level 3;			
	support for pupils with SEN;			
	support for pupils with EAL?			
provide regular opportunities to make connections between different aspects of the subject and to revisit aspects/topics?				
build in time for regular review of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding?				

What could be done? List up to two action points to improve medium-term planning.
■
■

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Short-term planning

Effective short-term or day-to-day planning is a key element of the National Literacy, Numeracy and Key Stage 3 Strategies. The main task of short-term planning is to explain what, how and when pupils are to be taught and to identify the activities to promote, extend and consolidate their learning.

Do your short-term (day-to-day) plans for a unit of work:	**usually**	**sometimes but not always**	**rarely**
identify clear objectives for what pupils are to achieve in a lesson, based on the medium-term plan?			
indicate the key subject vocabulary to be emphasised?			
outline the main teaching inputs, and key points for teacher exposition, modelling and questioning?			
outline how the lesson will develop, including the main tasks and activities for pupils, and the time these are to take?			
outline expectations for higher attaining pupils, and any extended tasks for them?			
indicate which pupils will receive extra support during lessons, and any modifications or simplifications of tasks and activities that they will do?			
indicate the essential resources needed, including relevant sections of published materials, practical equipment, and the use of ICT?			
outline key points to be summarised or addressed at the end of the lesson, and how pupils will be involved?			
indicate, as relevant, homework assignments?			

What could be done? List up to two action points to improve short-term planning.
■ ■

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Teaching

Initial impressions, based on departmental discussions, can be recorded first. The head of department and a senior manager will also need to use information from lessons in the subject that have already been observed as part of the school's normal routines, and/or specifically observe over a period of time a sample of lessons across Key Stages 2 and 3. Record here whether lessons have the key features listed below.

Key: **1. the feature is well established** **2. the feature is evident in some lessons but not all** **3. the feature is not yet part of practice**	Initial impression 1/2/3	Observed evidence 1/2/3	Comments/action
Teachers tell pupils what they are expected to learn in a lesson, and pupils understand which objectives/targets are being addressed.			
Lessons build explicitly on prior learning.			
Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject. They and their pupils use subject-specific vocabulary correctly.			
Pupils are shown what is wanted though modelling or demonstration. Rules, techniques and conventions are explicitly taught.			
Lessons are well structured with good pace and a good balance between whole class and group activity.			
All pupils are expected to be engaged and to contribute through a range of opportunities for participation.			
Pupils receive oral and written feedback targeted at improving their work.			
There is a good use of lesson starters; and learning is consolidated through plenaries.			

[continued overleaf]

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Key: 1. the feature is well established 2. the feature is evident in some lessons but not all 3. the feature is not yet part of practice	Initial impression 1/2/3	Observed evidence 1/2/3	Comments/action
Teaching is inclusive, ensuring that all pupils are challenged and supported effectively and are fully involved in the lesson; including; high-attaining pupils; those with SEN; those with EAL.			
When available, support staff are deployed effectively during whole-class and group time.			

Are there any noticeable differences between the teaching of different year groups or different groups of pupils? If so, note them here.

Where observed evidence indicates that an aspect of teaching is less effective than initial impressions had suggested, it will be important to decide how best to work with staff to introduce or strengthen those features.

What could be done? List up to three action points to strengthen teaching.
■ ■ ■

Assessment

Tick the relevant boxes.

Do your assessments match these criteria?	fully in place	partly in place	not in place
Assessment is **for** learning, not just **of** learning. It is based on objectives from the subject's scheme of work or key objectives in the appropriate Framework. It is used to guide lesson planning and identify the particular help that individuals and groups of pupils need.			
Whole classes or groups of pupils have curricular targets for improvement.			
There is a system for tracking pupils' progress against their targets and for responding to pupils who fall behind.			
Marking includes teachers' comments, which show clearly what a pupil needs to do to improve. A response from pupils is expected.			
Test papers/assessment assignments are analysed to identify pupils' errors or misconceptions, and pupils are made aware of these. Particular attention is paid to the quality of pupils' work under test conditions.			
Records are manageable and useful for teachers. Individual records, incorporating pupil targets, are kept for pupils whose progress is markedly different from the norm.			
Pupil are encouraged to assess their own progress.			

What could be done? List up to three action points to improve assessment
■ ■ ■

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Management of the subject and general issues

This section is not designed to give comprehensive coverage of management issues but focuses on those aspects that are particularly relevant to raising achievement

Points for action	fully in place	partly in place	not in place
Are targets set for the proportions of pupils achieving particular levels in the subject?			
Is there a subject action plan to meet the targets?			
Is the plan monitored regularly by the subject leader/coordinator and SMT?			
Are the findings from monitoring linked to a programme of professional development for staff?			

What systems help to strengthen the quality of teaching in the subject:	fully in place	partly in place	not in place
a cycle of lesson observations with feedback?			
regular support with planning?			
regular sampling of marking and pupils' responses?			
regular discussions about the quality of teaching and learning, sometimes with a subject focus?			
a planned professional development programme for staff?			

What could be done? List up to three action points to improve the management of the subject.
■ ■ ■

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Action points

Review the possible action points identified earlier and decide on up to six key priorities to improve standards in the subject. Use the table below, or a similar one, to record your priorities, photocopying extra sheets as needed.

Priority			
Success criteria and/or target(s)			
Action(s)		**Person responsible**	**Timing or deadline**
Resources			
Consultant support			
Monitoring			

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Notes

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